

ABSTRACT

Load balancing apparatus for a data communications network comprises hash logic for computing a hash function on incoming data packets. A threshold detector is connected to the hash logic
5 for triggering, in response to utilization of the downstream objects exceeding a predefined threshold, redefinition in the hash logic of parameters of the hash function from a first set of parameters to a second set of parameters for redistributing the data packets amongst the downstream objects. In use, the hash
10 logic, directs the packets for routing to downstream objects in the network via a first routing path based on a hash computation using the first set of parameters, and, if the threshold is exceeded, selectively directs the packets to one of the first routing path and a second routing path in dependence on separate
15 hash computations using the first and the second sets of parameters for subsequent routing of the packets via the selected one of the first and second routing paths based on the results of one of the separate hash computations.